

## SPORTS

# Chris Brown Bahamas Invitational should be cemented on national list

In 2013, the Eternal One, Chris Brown, he of the kind of quality longevity unsurpassed in world track history, brought the finest athletes of his sport to the country of his birth.

It truly was a phenomenal sports stage on which some of the greatest track athletes of all time performed. Two years later, he repeated his magnificent sports/tourism contribution via an amazing competitive product, which he had created.

The event was the Chris Brown Bahamas Invitational (CBBI). Brown had gotten official permission from the Government of The Bahamas to brand his invitational event jointly with the country.

It was one of those developments that should live on to provide generations with something synonymous with one of the greatest sons of the Bahamian soil.

I believe there is nation-wide support in that regard.

Yet, interestingly and unbelievably, as I sat during the ceremony, several weeks ago in Grand Bahama to honor the Golden Knights for their glo-

rious accomplishment at the London Olympics in 2012, a 1600 meters relay gold medal, there was a disclosure from the Minister of Youth Sports and Culture that was disconcerting.

I heard Minister of Sports Michael Pintard say that a "Bahamas Invitational" would be staged in 2019 and if Brown (who was seated behind him on the platform), "would be so minded" he could serve as the patron of the event.

It was a baffling statement, a truly alarming one. It was an awkward moment for Brown, because as he mentioned to me afterwards, he did not quite know what to make of what he had heard.

You see, just like Brown, I, and most definitely all who were associated with the Chris Brown Bahamas Invitational, just assumed that his event would enjoy continuity, that just a bit of fleshing out was necessary for the government to agree on a particular CBBI template going forward.

Now, the sports minister is talking about a "Bahamas Invitational" and not a "Chris Brown Bahamas Invitational"



**MICHAEL PINTARD**  
Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture

and to boot, he wants Chris Brown to be the patron.

Well, unknowingly or otherwise, Minister Pintard succeeded in insulting a revered Bahamian icon.

Chris Brown should always be allowed to "own" his event and others be asked to be patrons. I wonder if Minister Pintard quite understood what he was doing. During our chat after the ceremony Brown clearly was mystified. We haven't spoken since. I could only hope that if there has been dialogue with the minister, post the Golden Knights' salute in Grand Bahama, that a mutual understanding was reached.

If the Government of The Bahamas endorses a track invitational, the Chris Brown Bahamas Invitational should be a priority.

Perhaps the minister has a good explanation. If Minister Pintard in fact does, he should come forward. As it is, upon his words at the affair for the Golden Knights, with the senior one



**CHRIS BROWN**  
The Eternal One

of them, Chris Brown, looking on and listening intently, it surely sounded as though the Chris Brown Bahamas Invitational had already been phased out in

favor of an event called simply the Bahamas Invitational.

What is it Minister Pintard? Has the Chris Brown Bahamas Invitational been phased

out, or was it just a misstep? **To respond to this column, kindly contact Fred Sturupp at [sturupp1504@gmail.com](mailto:sturupp1504@gmail.com) or on WhatsApp at 727-6363.**

## SPORTS SCOPE

By FRED STURUP



**JUNIOR FLAG FOOTBALL** - The Grand Bahama Flag Football League has officially launched its 16-week long junior development program. The program continues this and every Saturday at the Grand Bahama Sports Complex at 10:00 a.m. The program caters to juniors ages 7-17 This past weekend the juniors were pictured going through quarterback and wide receiver drills.

(PHOTOS: SHAYNE STUBBS)

# GBFFL launches Youth Development League

Over 20 junior players showed up and were tested in various quarterback and wide receiver drills. The program is expected to run every Saturday over the next 16 weeks tentatively between the hours of 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

GBFFL Commissioner Stafford Albury spoke with members of the media and voiced bringing the juniors on board had been in the works for the past two years. Now that the league has the personnel in place, all parties involved thought it was finally time to give the juniors another outlet to participate in.

"We had a lot of children and

a lot of parents that came to us and said it would be great if we could start a youth league and they would support it," he expressed, "And as you can see a lot of parents did bring their children out so we could get this league started."

Albury furthered that teaching the fundamentals will be the primary focal point. When asked about how teams would be selected, the Commissioner noted that they are currently working on a draft system, and noted that there are already a few teams ready to join.

"We were looking at Jack Hayward School, they have a team

they want to bring out - also, St. George's and Sunland. Once you bring your team that's great but if you just step into the arena we're going to have to put you in a draft.

"We have a draft system that we're currently working on right now. So any young kids who want to come in they'll go into the draft and we'll draft them onto another team so they can play."

GBFFL president Craig Smith addressed that the reason behind getting the junior league started was due the maintenance of the adult league, while also searching for sponsors of the junior

league.

Smith furthered that with other islands facilitating their own young adults league, it's time for Grand Bahama to get up to speed.

"We really want to get these kids ready because Nassau and Abaco and Exuma have a junior league going," he stated, "In November we want to take down a few teams to Abaco for their junior tournament."

"We also want to form a league here so we could get the kids going like a feeder league to the GBFFL."

Nonetheless, the GBFFL president was happy about this past

Saturday's turn out and looked forward to seeing the participation grow in the coming weeks.

"But I'm happy about the turn out today. I figure it's going to get bigger because more people will become aware about it."

"With communities, we'll go into Hunter's - we were supposed to have kids from there bussed in. We bussed in some from Eight Mile Rock this morning and we'll just keep doing that to try and get everybody out."

Smith added that there is a big need for Corporate Grand Bahama to lend their support to the junior league.

**SHAYNE STUBBS**  
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Flag Football has come one of the fastest growing pastimes on Grand Bahama and in the country.

Now, the Grand Bahama Flag Football League is aiming to ensure the sport continues to grow in all levels.

This past Saturday, at the Grand Bahama Sports Complex, the GBFFL launched its Youth Football Program. The developmental venture caters to young persons ages 7-17.